

CURRENT MISCELLANY.

A Procession of Worms.

Even after tea was introduced into Europe and had come into general use, the worms were scarce, says the *Jeweler's Circular*. At the same time coffee was introduced; but, apart from Constantinople, the first coffee cups in Europe date back only as far as 1645 in Venice, 1659 in Paris, 1662 in London and 1694 in Leipzig. From the first, however, the conventional Oriental coffee cup with its out-stem or handle was little used in Germany not at all. The Chinese teacup was used for tea, coffee and chocolate. Specimens of porcelain were undoubtedly introduced into Europe in the middle ages, yet not till the sixteenth century were cups imported from China in any great quantities, and even then it was as articles of virtu. Most of these found their way back to China again, as collecting porcelain is a lasting fad there, and high prices are paid for good specimens. The collection of Chinese porcelain, if only the genuine specimens are desired, requires immense study and knowledge, as the Chinese are skilled in water and other numerous falsifications on the market.

Saved by Their Wheelbarrows.
Speaking about storms, said Captain William Dauler, of the *Araucaria* Pass Harbor company, "one hears all sorts of stories about the cyclones which have from time to time ravaged the Gulf coast. Was it in 1893 that a very severe storm blew in the vicinity of Rockport, and it was during the blow that several miles of the sand and shingle beach between the Gulf and the beach at Rockport, the bluff of the San Antonio and Araucaria Pass road, was washed into the bay. Colonel Lett employed a large number of Mexicans during many of these past years, and during the storm, the cyclone, waves of them were missing and it was thought drowned."

"As a matter of fact, of considerable surprise, not a single Mexican lost his life. For days afterward they could be seen wading across the sand, each man wheeling his wheelbarrow. When the men realized that they were doomed to risk a watery grave, every one of them grabbed his wheelbarrow and floated away in it. The barrows all grounded as the water subsided, and the Mexicans made for the coast and in the direction of what remained of the beach. Work was not again resumed on the roadbed, but large sections of the work are still noticeable along the bay coast."—*New Orleans Times-Democrat*.

Ballooning Long Ago.

A quaint account of an attempted ascension in this city 111 years ago is found in the *New York Gazette* of July 14, 1786. "On Tuesday evening last," says the writer, "a great number of people assembled in the Broadway lane to gratify their curiosity in the science of ballooning. About sunset the aeronauts began to ascend, and the crowd, when to his utter confusion and the no small disappointment of the spectators, he was unable to raise it five feet above the earth, although himself and three more kept shoving it with their hands a considerable time, till at last he overcame and immediately went off in a puff, which excited the laughter of some and the chagrin of others."

Books at a Lightning Speed.

A large bookbinder may have a capacity of 10,000 books a day. The record of some of the fastest bookbinders is wonderful. There is an instance on record where a publishing house took an order on Monday for a cloth covered 12mo. volume of 450 pages, and actually shipped it 2,000 copies the following Wednesday. The type was set by machinery for the entire 350 pages before work stopped Monday night. On Tuesday morning several printing presses were set in motion. In the meantime covers were made in the bindery, and by Wednesday morning the binders had the book in hand. Two thousand volumes were completed that day, and the edition of 10,000 was entirely out of the way before Saturday night. In modern bookbinding machinery, as is the production of printing, America leads the world, and no other nation can equal it in speed and general effectiveness with which all branches of the industry are carried out.—*Literary Digest*.

Siberia's Snow Flower.

Travelers in Siberia tell of the wonderful flower that grows there and which blooms only in winter, when the winter is at its height. The blossom has something of the characteristic of a morning glory, lasting only a single day. The flower, when it opens, is star-shaped. Its petals are of the same length as the leaves and about half an inch in width. On the third day the extremities of the anthers, which are five in number, show minute, gleaming specks, veritable vegetable diamonds, about the size of a pin's head. These are the seed of the flower. A Russian nobleman named Antokolsky took a number of the seeds to St. Petersburg. They were placed in a pot of snow and frozen earth. On the oldest day of the following January the miraculous flower burst through its icy covering and displayed its beauties to the wondering scientists. The plant has been very appropriately named "the snow flower."—*Frisburg Dispatch*.

Russia's Two Horrible Fish Cakes.

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